PSYCHOLOGICAL PROFILING OF YOUTH AND PROFESSIONAL FOOTBALL PLAYERS

RESEARCH PROPOSAL

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CHAPTER-I

INTRODUCTION

Sports today has become part of our culture. The television and other forms of media bring all the major sporting events to our homes. And the one game that has no rival in terms of popularity in the world is football (Soccer). Players like, Pele, Maradona, Ronaldo, Messi etc., have become household names. This has put the performance of the players under a microscope. The football game has become highly professional worldwide at all levels. With this increased pressure players are looking for means to better their performance. Factors such as physical conditioning, skill and match experience are fundamentally important in determining their level of success. However there are many psychological factors that are equally important to consider if the players are to achieve his or her potential. Most athletes get fatigued mentally even before they fatigue physically. It is due to the fact that their mind is not in as good shape as their bodies. It is here that mental skills training comes into play.

(Bailey, 2014)Footballers aren't exactly famed for their intelligence off the pitch, yet their mental skills during the heat of competition are by and large something to behold. They display their footballing skills in packed stadiums under intense pressure and provocation. Brain is vital for decision-making, anticipation and awareness. According to a study published by the Journal of Sport Behaviour in 2010, psychological skills, such as positive self-talk at half-time improved the performance of midfield players in the second half in at least two of the three performance components measured (passing, first touch and tackling).

(Wann & Church, 1998)Hence Coaches and athletes from wide variety of sports have begun to realize the importance of the mental side of athletic performance, more specifically individuals involved with organised sport. They now understand that to perform at peak level of efficiency, they must possess and use a number of psychological skills.[2]

In India the game of cricket is followed like religion. But with the advent of Indian Super League (ISL) football too is becoming popular among the masses. However in Goa, football has been declared as the official state sport since 2012. And Goa houses most of the top national football clubs such as the Dempo Sports club, Salgaoncar Sports club, Sporting Clube de Goa,

Churchill Brothers Sports club and Vasco Sports club who have made their mark on the national scene. Presently there are more than 130 registered football clubs with Goa Football Association who participate annually in their various division leagues. The big power houses of football spend crores of rupees on the players, coaches and equipment to secure top position in the professional leagues. However not much attention is given to the mental aspect of the players. Hence it is apt that the focus of the present study is to understand the mental make-up of the players and use a profiling approach to determine the psychological edge among the youth and professional football players in Goa.

1.1 Statement of the Problem:

The purpose of the study is to determine the psychological profile of youth and professional football players in Goa.

1.2 Delimitation:

1. The study will be delimited to 80 youth and 80 professional players in Goa.
2. The study will further be delimited to selective questionnaire namely:
    a) Group Environment Questionnaire (GEQ) by Carron et al. (1980)
    b) Athletic Coping Skill Inventory (ACSI) by Smith et al. (1995)
    c) Task and Ego Orientation in Sport Questionnaire (TEOSQ) by Duda et al. (1995)

1.3 Limitation:

1. Questionnaire research has its limitations, any bias that might enter into the subject's response on this account is considered as a limitation to this study.
2. Life style of the subject is beyond the control of researcher. Hence socio-economic and religious factors, which cannot be controlled by the scholar, might affect the responses of the students, these are considered as limitations for this study.

3. The coaching style of coaches of various clubs is different. This might too influence the answers of the players and is also considered as another limitation of the study.

1.4 Definition of Terms:

Psychological Profile

Psychological- related to the mental and emotional state of a person.

Profile- a short article giving a description of a person or organization.

Therefore it can be said that psychological profile is a description of a person's mental and emotional characteristics.

Youth Player

Someone who is young, inexperienced and in the period of early development especially between adolescence and early adulthood**.**

Professional Player

Someone who is skillful, experienced and extremely competent in a sport for which he/she is paid.

A person who earns a living in a sport.

Mental Skills

Mental skills are internal capabilities that help an athlete improve performance by learning to control their minds efficiently and consistently as they execute attainable goals.

1.5 Significance of the Study:

1. The study will help to know and understand the present psychological status of the youth and professional football players in Goa.

2. Besides it will help the coaches and managers to better understand the players and in turn be able to bring out the best performance from them.
3. The study will aid the players themselves to know their own mental strengths and weaknesses and work on them accordingly to be able to give their best performance every time they enter the field.
4. The youth players will benefit the most from this study as they will know what level of mental skills is required to play at the professional level.
5. This study will help the P.E. teachers, coaches, selectors and administrators who are in some way or the other linked in the process of sports team selection to get a better insight into the psychological factors involved in sports performance specifically in the game of football.

1.6 Hypothesis:

On the basis of the literature gone through, research findings and the scholars understanding of the problem, following hypothesis are formulated.

Hypothesis 1: There will be significant difference in the (a) Group Environment Scores (ATG-T, ATG-S, GI-T &GI-S): (b) Athletic Coping Skill Inventory (ACSI)-coping with adversity, peeking under pressure, goal setting, concentration, freedom from worry, confidence and achievement motivation, and coachability (c) Task and Ego Orientation (TEOSQ) of the youth and professional players due to experience factor.

Hypothesis 2: There will be significant difference in the (a) Group Environment Scores (ATG-T, ATG-S, GI-T &GI-S): (b) Athletic Coping Skill Inventory (ACSI)-coping with adversity, peeking under pressure, goal setting, concentration, freedom from worry, confidence and achievement motivation, and coachability (c) Task and Ego Orientation (TEOSQ) between players belonging to the various clubs due to the different coaching styles within both the categories of youth and professional league team players.

Hypothesis 3: There will be significant difference in the (a) Group Environment Scores (ATG-T, ATG-S, GI-T &GI-S): (b) Athletic Coping Skill Inventory (ACSI)-coping with adversity, peeking under pressure, goal setting, concentration, freedom from worry, confidence and achievement motivation, and coachability (c) Task and Ego Orientation (TEOSQ) of the players belonging to different positions in the team within both the categories of youth and professional league team players .

CHAPTER-II
REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The literature relevant to the present study collected from various sources that the researcher has come across is listed below.

Sang (1989), investigated the relationship between selected psychological variables and playing position of football players. Subjects were 43 Division I intercollegiate football players. The athletes were categorized as a function of team (offense vs. defense) and position (linemen vs. backfield). Data were analyzed using Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA) and follow-up ANOVA procedures. In the first analysis, team and playing position were studied relative to psychological skill as measured by the psychological Skills Inventory for Sports (PSIS) (Mahoney, Gabriel, & Perkins, 1987). In the second analysis, team and player position were studied relative to mood states as measured by the Profile of Mood States (POMS) (McNair, Lorr, & Droppleman, 1981). The MANOVA for psychological skills revealed a significant player position main effect (R=.018) and a significant interaction between team (offense vs. defense) and player position (linemen vs. backfield). Univariate post-hoc comparisons revealed least significant differences (LSD) between offensive linemen and offensive backfield players on the psychological dimensions of anxiety and motivation and between defensive linemen and defensive backfield players on anxiety, concentration, and confidence, favoring the backfield position. In addition, the offensive backfield players were observed to enjoy superior confidence scores when compared with defensive linemen. In general, the psychological skills of backfield players were observed to be superior to linemen, regardless of whether they played offense or defense. The MANOVA on mood states failed to reveal significant differences for the main effect of team, position, or their interaction. Univariate comparisons (LSD) revealed significant differences between linemen and backfield players on the mood state of confusion, favoring backfield players.

Junge et al (2000) It is hypothesized that players of different levels of play might differ not only in their football skills but also in their way of playing football and with respect to psychological factors such as concentration, reaction time, or competitive anxiety. The psychological characteristics of a player might influence his way of playing football (in

particular with respect to fair play) and also his risk of injury. A group of 588 football players were studied by questionnaire; additionally, reaction time tests were performed. Psychological characteristics were assessed by three established self-evaluation questionnaires: the Athletic Coping Skills Inventory, the State Competitive Anxiety Test, and the State-Trait-Anger-Expression-Inventory. Football-specific characteristics that were investigated included playing experience and positions played, style of play, number of training hours and games, as well as aspects of fair play. Reaction time was tested twice: without the influence of physical exercise and immediately after a 12-minute run. A significant reduction in reaction time was observed after physical exercise. In high-level players, the reaction time immediately after the 12-minute run was significantly shorter than it was in low-level players. The questionnaire answers given regarding fair play clearly indicated that fair play is not paid sufficient respect. The relationship between psychological characteristics and attitudes toward fair play was analyzed and discussed.

Rang (2001), The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship of group cohesion, leadership styles and win/loss records in collegiate soccer teams at various levels of experience and ability. One hundred ninety athletes (122 F; 68 M) from Division 1, 11, 111 and Junior Colleges completed a demographic questionnaire, the Group Environment Questionnaire (GEQ) and the preferred and perceived versions of Leadership Scale for Sports (LSS). Descriptive statistics were completed for all variables. Internal consistency reliability was estimated via coefficient alpha for the subfactors of both the GEQ and LSS. Discrepancy scores were then calculated by subtracting the perception of leadership behavior from the preference for such behavior. Pearson Product Moment Correlations were used to measure the relationships between the GEQ and discrepancy LSS test scores and win/loss percentages. One way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to determine whether there were significant differences on the GEQ and LSS subscales across gender, win/loss percentages, and divisions. Results indicated gender differences for cohesion with females scoring higher than males on three out of the four GEQ subscales; however there were no significant differences between males and females for LSS discrepancy scores. Participants from successful teams recorded significantly higher scores on all subscales of the GEQ and significantly lower scores for all dimensions of the LSS. Results for division indicated that lower division athletes, particularly Division III athletes, were significantly more cohesive than Division I athletes scoring higher on all GEQ subscales, and

had lower discrepancy scores on all of the LSS subscales. Group cohesion and athlete/coach compatibility were significantly related to win/loss percentages although they were not very strong. Relationships between the GEQ and LSS existed for both of the task dimensions of cohesion and four LSS subscales, with social support recording no significance. A significant relationship between GI-S and DISCTI did exist, however the practical significance indicates that for this sample these two factors have little in common. Overall, the results for leadership styles contradicted previous research with all variables (gender, team success, and divisions) indicating that the athletes preferred autocratic decision-making when compared to democratic leadership. It should be considered that the timing of the assessments may affect the athletes' responses; end of the season testing, as done in this study, requires the athletes to recall an entire season of events and playoff pressures may distract the athletes from answering the questions accurately. Further studies should examine the differences in cohesion and leadership styles in sports (particularly soccer) between different countries, genders, different levels and age groups to better understand the complex relationship between group cohesion, leadership, and performance

Schaubhut et al (2006) conducted a study to determine personality profiles of North American professional football players. This study used a sample of 812 North American professional football players who completed the CPI 260™ assessment. Logistic regression and discriminant function analyses were used to examine personality differences among groups of players, including several positions, and offense versus defense. Variables were also collected via information available from a North American professional football league website. This data included which players were drafted, their draft number, and the round in which they were selected, number of games played per regular season, classification as offensive or defensive position. Players were first classified as offensive linemen, offensive backfield, defensive linemen, or defensive backfield. Descriptive statistics were then calculated. A discriminant function analysis was also conducted using the CPI 260 scales as predictors of players' positions. Defensive backs average slightly higher scores than defensive linemen on the Gi and Ac scales. Linemen (offense and defense) show more differences. For example, offensive linemen average higher scores than defensive linemen on the So, Well-being (Wb), and Tolerance (To) scales. One notable pattern is that offensive linemen have the highest average scores on eighteen of the twenty-nine scales, while defensive linemen average the lowest scores on nineteen of the scales.

Those selected in the draft average slightly higher scores on the Self-control (Sc) and Gi scales. The average scores for these athletes on the Sp, Re, Cm, Fx and CT scales do reflect development opportunities for these professionals. This study shows that there appear to be some personality differences among players of different positions. A follow-up study may seek to determine whether there are differences between more and less successful North American professional football players. Future research should examine personality in sports longitudinally, an approach that has been utilized little, and include performance measures. Additionally, researchers may want to control other variables, such as abilities, when studying personality among athletes. Another interesting approach would be to study athletes' CPI 260 scores in terms of misconduct, such as penalties and fines in the game, and arrests or other misbehaviors outside the game.

Baric et al (2006), carried out a study to examine the selected psychometric properties of the Croatian version of Task and Ego Orientation in Sport Questionnaire in order to extend the construct validation of this motivation instrument. Their study utilized a quasi-confirmatory factor analytic approach to evaluate the theoretical two-factor structure of the original TEOSQ score and to examine the assumption of structure invariance across two different sports. 388 young male Croatian athletes from 17 football and 17 handball teams participated in the study. The results showed that the Croatian version of TEOSQ confirmed the original two-factor solution (task, ego). Cronbach's alpha coefficients for both dimensions indicated adequate reliability. The results are discussed with regard to accurate assessment of motivational constructs and for a valid and reliable instrument that can be used within the national sport-specific environment.

Spieler (2006), investigated psychological factors that helps in predicting the starting status of collegiate football players in the game along with their success.

Participants for the study included 108 male football players from 6 teams in a NCAA Division I Southeastern conference in Georgia. Using multivariate analysis of variance and discriminant analysis, the current research attempted to determine factors from demographic information, the Ten-Item Personality Inventory, and the Athletic Coping Skills Inventory-28, that most accurately predicts starting status in collegiate football players. Results showed that there was a

significant difference between starters and non-starters for age, high school size, and coping with adversity, predicting starting status 79.6% of the time.

Rizzardo (2010) conducted a study to determine if a characteristic psychological profile exist for soccer players at the ages nine, twelve and fifteen years. The aim of his research was to find out if psychological profile differed between elite and recreational soccer players. And also to see if these differences were constant across the same ages mentioned above. The Piers-Harris Children's Self-Concept Scale, Marten's Sport Competitive Anxiety Test, the Nowicki-Strickland Children's Locus of Control Scale and Cattell's Children's Personality Questionnaire (ages 8-12) or Cattell's High School Personality Questionnaire (ages 12-16) were administered to 136 male soccer players that participated in the Vancouver and District Soccer League (elite) or the Vancouver Community League (recreational). The six personality traits hypothesized to distinguish the elite athlete (emotional stability, tough mindedness, aggressiveness, dominance, persistence, self-confidence) were analyzed in separate multivariate and univariate analyses of variance from the data received from the three psycho-social components – locus of control, self-concept, and sport competitive anxiety. The results did not identify a specific psychological profile for elite male players at the ages nine, twelve and fifteen. Neither did it support the premise that there was a psychological difference between the elite and recreational players. It was recommended that sport specific questionnaires be used for future endeavors in identifying psychological profiles of athletes.

Gyambrah, et al (2013)The purpose of their study was to assess the mental toughness of senior high school football players in the Greater Accra Region of Ghana. Descriptive survey design was employed and 30 male student football players sampled from a twelve week football training programme were studied using convenience and purposive sampling techniques. Their psychological factors of mental toughness were tested by Loehr's (1986) mental toughness test. The factors recorded for mental toughness indicated controlled attitude, self-confidence, positive energy, motivational level, attentional control, visualisation and imagery. Players tested average in all the factors with controlled attitude being the highest and control of attention their lowest. From the findings it is recommended that, high school football players should be trained to enhance all the seven factors for mental toughness. Again an examination of differences between players at all levels in a variety of sporting and physical activities and noting changes across

different situations will promote understanding of mental toughness, quality of psychomotor intelligence and cognitive processes in schools.

Jooste et al (2014) investigated the psychological skills of African youth soccer players in different playing positions. The role of psychological skills and overall team performance was also determined. The sample consisted of male soccer players (N=152) between the ages of 14 and 18 years from 10 African countries competing in the 2010 Copa Coca-Cola soccer tournament. A cross-sectional survey design was used to determine the players' psychological skills by means of the Bull's Mental Skills Questionnaire and the Athletic Coping Skills Inventory-28 (ACSI-28). Results yielded insignificant differences between the subscale scores of the players in different playing positions. Concentration was the only psychological variable associated with performance. The middle four-ranked teams outscored the most successful and least successful teams in relaxation. Findings from this study could not confirm the widely acclaimed research assumption that psychological skill demands differ among players in different playing positions, nor the positive correlation between psychological skills and team success.

Amira et al (2015) the purpose of the study was to investigate selected psychological skills of male youth soccer players in different playing positions. This study examined possible positional differences of 180 male youth Tunisian soccer players between the ages of 15 and 19 years old from different clubs of 1st and 3rd Youth Class divisions. The subjects were divided into three playing positions, namely, forward (n = 60), midfield (n = 60) and defense (n = 60), and compared with regard to twelve psychological skills measured by means of the Ottawa Mental Skills Assessment Tool (OMSAT-3) of Durand Bush et al. (2001). Results yielded significant differences between basic and psychosomatic subscale scores of the players in different playing positions. Forward players consistently outperformed the other positional groups in motivation, confidence and activation. Defense players outperformed the other positional groups in relaxation, while midfield players showed the lowest psychological skill levels. The results of the study provided support for the hypothesis that positional differences in terms of psychological skills existed. More specifically, statistical evidence suggested that youth soccer players could be differentiated as a function of psychological skill and the position that they played on the team.

CHAPTER-III

PROCEDURE

This chapter describes how the research will be carried out. It includes selection of subjects, administration of questionnaires, and the statistical techniques to be used for analyzing the data.

3.1 Selection of Subjects:

The subjects for the study will be 80 youth football players playing in the under 18 league and 80 professional football players playing in the Goa Professional League conducted by Goa Football Association.

3.2 Selection of Test Items:

The following standard questionnaires and variables will be used to gather data.

1. Demographic Information sheet to know the background of the subjects like age, marital status, highest football achievement, number of hours devoted to training, etc.
2. Group Environment Questionnaire (GEQ) by Carron et al. (1980)
3. Athletic Coping Skill Inventory (ACSI) by Smith et al. (1995)
4. Task and Ego Orientation in Sport Questionnaire (TEOSQ) by Duda et al. (1995)

3.3 Administration of Test Items:

Different teams participating in the under 18 and professional League will be contacted, briefed and requested to administer the test items to their teams separately. The players too will be briefed before the start of data collection about the purpose of the research and also assured of the confidentiality of the information provided by them. They will be given clear and detailed instructions regarding the questionnaires. All the three Questionnaires along with the demographic sheet will then be administered to the players. The subjects will be encouraged and prompted to give genuine responses by the investigator to the test statements.

3.4 Statistical Techniques:

The following statistical techniques will be used for the analysis of the data with the help of computer software, statistical package for social sciences (SPSS). Frequency distribution will be done to determine the mean and standard deviation for the data of each questionnaire separately.

The analysis of variance, will be used to test the significance of the differences for the various sub factors of the test items for the youth players and the professional players separately. Multiple comparisons and Scheffe's Post Hoc test will be employed to find the significant difference on the dependent variable if any between the two groups.

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